



Top of the South
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Tē Tāuiku

Giving that grows forever

2025/26
IMPACT REPORT



Plant a seed for the future of Te Taihū.

A community flourishes when people plant trees under whose shade they will never sit.

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Introduction

2025-2026 Impact Report

Welcome to our 2025-2026 Impact Report, highlighting our work, impact, governance and financial performance from April 2025 to March 2026.

Inside, you'll find updates from our leadership and committees, along with impact stories, donor profiles, funding highlights, Community Group Fund updates, and a summary of this year's grants and distributions.

Top of the South Community Foundation

Top of the South Community Foundation (TSCF) inspires and facilitates giving across Te Taihū – including the Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough districts. We empower generous donors to support the causes they love, with a focus on building an endowment fund that enables those donations to keep giving to our community for generations to come.

Empowering change

The Foundation exists to make a real difference in our region. Since our launch in 2010, generous donors have enabled us to grant more than \$1.4 million to local causes in line with their wishes. More than funding, these gifts are creating lasting community benefit across Te Taihū.

Philanthropy and the changing landscape

Community philanthropy in Aotearoa has grown significantly over the past three decades. Today, community foundations collectively steward more than \$366 million in assets, with an estimated \$1.3 billion committed through future gifts in wills. As New Zealand enters a major intergenerational transfer of wealth, community foundations are playing an increasingly important role in helping generosity create lasting local impact.

Building on Strong Foundations

Over the past year, the Foundation has welcomed a new Chief Executive Officer and three new Board members, bringing fresh perspectives while building on the strong foundations established by those who came before. This period of transition has provided an opportunity to reflect on our purpose, review our strategy and strengthen our vision for the years ahead. This review has reaffirmed our purpose, clarified our priorities and provided a clear direction for the future.

“The future of this region won’t be shaped by one, grand gesture. It will be shaped by many, thoughtful decisions, made over time.”

Top of the South Community Foundation Lifetime Impact

341

GRANTS AWARDED ON
BEHALF OF OUR
DONORS

\$1.4M

DISTRIBUTED TO
WORTHY CAUSES AND
PROJECTS SINCE 2010

191

TOTAL
ORGANISATIONS
SUPPORTED

Generous Donors Thriving Community

Community Foundations run a well-proven model of philanthropy that has been growing worldwide for more than 100 years. They focus on people and place, strengthening communities from within. Local, independent, and not-for-profit, Community Foundations provide the philanthropic infrastructure that helps communities to thrive.

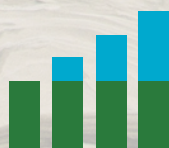
Today there are approximately 2,000 Community Foundations across the globe. Top of the South Community Foundation is proud to be one of 18 in Aotearoa New Zealand, supported by our umbrella organisation, Community Foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand.



How our unique giving model works



Your gift



is invested
and grown



and the ongoing
income earned



goes to the local
causes you love.

Board & Operations Team



Trustees (left to right): Alex Hannant, Jane Peterson, Anissa Bain, Howie Timms, Paul Nicholson, Corey Hebbard, Rachel Sanson, Bill Rainey.

Trustees

Jane Peterson	Chair / Trustee
Bill Rainey	Deputy Chair / Trustee
Anissa Bain	Trustee
Paul Nicholson	Trustee
Rachel Sanson	Trustee
Howie Timms	Trustee, joined in 2026
Alex Hannant	Trustee, joined in 2026
Corey Hebbard	Trustee, joined in 2026
Roy Dawson	Departing trustee, retired December 2025

Operations Team

Chelsea Routhan	CEO
Michaela Bayliss	Finance and Administration Officer
Jen Rutherford	Volunteer and Systems Lead
Lucy Prebble & Louise Hartstone YMT	YMT is the proud sponsor and marketing partner of the Top of the South Community Foundation, providing marketing and communications support.

Chair Report



Jane Peterson | Chair

Kia ora koutou, greetings everyone.

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded that the strength of our Foundation lies in the generosity of those who invest in the future of our region. To our donors and supporters, thank you. Every gift entrusted to the Foundation helps create lasting change by supporting the organisations and initiatives that strengthen our communities, now and for generations to come.

Our region has faced significant challenges over the past year. As a Community Foundation, we are privileged to connect generosity with need, helping ensure organisations making a real difference have the resources to continue their vital work. At times like these, the value of long-term, sustainable philanthropy has never been clearer.

This year has been one of significant growth and transition. Most notably, we welcomed Chelsea Routhan as our new Chief Executive. She has already made a significant contribution, bringing fresh energy, strategic insight and a strong commitment to our mission. Together with our highly capable operations team, the Foundation is well placed to build on its success and expand its impact across the region.

With change comes the opportunity to acknowledge those who have helped shape our journey. During the year we farewelled our former Chief Executive, Nettie Stow, whose leadership and dedication contributed greatly to the Foundation's growth and success. We also farewelled Roy Dawson after three years of valued service as a Trustee. Roy supported the Foundation through a period of remarkable growth, providing thoughtful governance, sound judgement and an unwavering commitment to our purpose. We are sincerely grateful to both for the time, commitment and passion they have given so generously.

We also welcomed three new Trustees – Alex Hannant, Corey Hebbard and Howie Timms. Each brings extensive commercial expertise, governance experience and deep community connections. They are already making a meaningful contribution, and we look forward to the perspectives they will bring as we guide the Foundation into its next chapter.

Our Foundation continues to grow, both in the funds entrusted to us and in our visibility and influence across the region. This year we increased our community profile through speaking engagements, expanded our social media communications and successfully launched our Professional Advisors Network. These initiatives are strengthening awareness of Community Foundations and helping more people understand how philanthropy can create lasting impact.

At a national level, the Community Foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand (CFANZ) network continues to go from strength to strength. Collectively, Community Foundations now steward more than \$366m in endowed funds across New Zealand, reflecting growing confidence in the model and its ability to create enduring local impact.

I extend my sincere thanks to our outstanding operations team, whose professionalism, passion and commitment underpin everything we achieve. My thanks also go to my fellow Trustees for their thoughtful governance and dedication, to our volunteers who generously give their time, and to our sponsors, professional partners and supporters who continue to champion our work.

Most importantly, thank you to everyone who has placed their trust in our Foundation. We simply could not do this without you. Together, we are creating a lasting legacy that will support our communities for generations to come.

***“E hara taku toa i te toa takatahi, he toa takatini -
My strength is not as an individual but as a
collective.”***

CEO Report

Kia ora, greetings everyone,

Over the past nine months, I have sat around kitchen tables, met in boardrooms, shared cups of tea and heard countless stories about the people and places that make this region special.

As someone born and raised in this region, it has been a privilege to return to those conversations in my role as Chief Executive Officer of Top of the South Community Foundation. What has struck me most is both the generosity of our community and the growing need that exists across it. Across Te Taihū, our for-purpose organisations are working harder than ever, stretching limited resources to meet growing need. I have been continually inspired by what they achieve despite these increasingly challenging conditions.

Since joining the Foundation in December 2025, I have spent much of my time listening to donors, professional advisors, community organisations and supporters across the region. Through these conversations, I have seen a shared desire to strengthen Top of the South for future generations and a growing recognition of philanthropy's role in making that possible. None of these conversations, and none of the work behind them, happens alone. I want to acknowledge Michaela, Jen, Louise and Lucy — our small but mighty operations and marketing team — whose care and capability show up in every grant paid, every system running quietly in the background, and every story told well. I also want to thank our Board, whose guidance and confidence have helped me find my feet this year and whose governance gives our donors and community confidence that this Foundation is being carefully stewarded, now and for the long term.

This year, more than \$610,000 was distributed to causes across our region, made possible by donors both long-standing and new to Te Taihū, each helping to build something that will outlast us all.

We have been fortunate to work alongside partners who believe in this mission as much as we do — Go Accounting, NBS, Cloudland, Craigs Investment Partners, Avoca and Your Marketing



Chelsea Routhan | CEO

Team — whose expertise and generosity are part of what allows a small foundation to do big things. We are grateful to our strategic partners, Community Foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand and The Tindall Foundation. This year marked an important milestone in our partnership with The Tindall Foundation, transitioning to a Local Donation Manager role that strengthens our ability to direct local funding to community wellbeing initiatives across Marlborough, Nelson and Tasman. We have also invested in the systems, processes and relationships that will support future growth and maximise the impact of every dollar entrusted to us.

Today, the Foundation stewards \$12.4 million on behalf of our community. As we refine our strategic direction, we are guided by the aspirations people share with us every day. Our ambition is to grow the Foundation to \$30 million under management by 2030, creating the potential to distribute approximately \$1.2 million annually into Te Taihū, forever.

Our theme this year, Giving That Grows Forever, captures the opportunity before us. Through the Foundation, a lifetime of hard work can become a lasting legacy for the place we call home.

I believe the Foundation can be more than a funder. Together, we can build a community resource that grows over time — a well that never runs dry. One that strengthens the fabric of our region, empowers future generations and helps us become good ancestors for those who follow.

To everyone who has placed their confidence in us this year — donors, fundholders, trustees, advisors, volunteers and community partners — thank you. Thank you for your generosity, your time, and your belief in what we can achieve together, for the good of Te Taihū, forever.

***“Nāku te rourou nāu te rourou ka ora ai te iwi —
With your basket and my basket, the people
will thrive.”***

Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk Committee Report

Established in 2025, the Finance, Audit, Investment & Risk (FAIR) Committee has replaced our existing Investment Advisory Committee. It assists the Board of Trustees by providing independent oversight of the Foundation's financial management, investment strategy, risk framework, audit processes and compliance responsibilities.

Through this work the Committee helps safeguard the Foundation's assets, supports long-term financial sustainability and maintains the confidence of our donors, partners and the wider community.

Committee Structure and Oversight

The Committee comprises four Trustees with experience in finance, investment, governance and business leadership. Throughout the year it met regularly and reported to each Board meeting, providing oversight of financial performance, investment activity, budgeting, risk management and governance matters.

Statement of Investment Principles and Objectives (SIPO)

A major focus during the year was the completion of the Foundation's first Statement of Investment Principles and Objectives (SIPO), which replaced the existing Investment Policy Statement.

Recognising that the Foundation's growing investment portfolio required a more formal governance framework, the Committee undertook a comprehensive review of investment philosophy, objectives, governance arrangements, risk parameters and performance expectations.

The SIPO provides a clear framework for investment decision-making, defines the respective responsibilities of the Board, the Committee and investment advisors, and establishes the framework for long-term investment management and performance monitoring.

Investment Performance and Advisor Model

The Committee also recommended that the Foundation move towards a multi-investment advisor model, recognising that offering donors a choice of approved investment advisors may strengthen the Foundation's appeal while maintaining appropriate governance and oversight. The Committee confirmed that the Foundation's balanced investment approach remains appropriate to achieving sustainable long-term returns while preserving the real value of capital for future generations. Our funds under management continued to grow, with \$12.4 million under management (at the time of writing this report).

Acknowledgements

The Committee believes that the work undertaken during the year has strengthened the Foundation's financial governance and investment oversight, providing a solid platform for future growth. On behalf of the Board, the Committee thanks the Foundation's management team, investment advisers, external auditor and fellow Trustees for their valuable contributions. The Committee remains committed to ensuring that the Foundation's resources are managed prudently and responsibly so they continue to provide enduring benefits for the communities of the Top of the South.

7.42%

**INVESTMENT
RETURN ON FUNDS
SINCE INCEPTION**

\$12.4m

**TOTAL FUNDS UNDER
MANAGEMENT/FUNDS
INVESTED AND
GROWING**

Over \$20m

**BEQUESTS
COMMITTED FOR
THE FUTURE
ENDOWMENT
FUNDS/PIPELINE**

Distribution Committee Report

The Distributions Committee plays a key role in translating donor generosity into high-impact outcomes across Te Taihū. Our primary purpose is to ensure that all distributed funds align with our donors' chosen intentions while supporting local organisations that drive positive, lasting outcomes. The committee oversees the grant round process, reviews funding applications, assesses regional alignment, and submits recommendations to the Board for final approval.

Committee Structure

Our committee composition reflects a thoughtful balance of Trustees, community representatives, and executive leadership. Together, we bring a blend of governance expertise alongside deep, localised community insights across Nelson, Tasman, and Marlborough. This broad perspective enables us to evaluate funding proposals with rigour, insight and empathy.

2025-2026 Distribution Highlights

During the 2025-2026 financial year, the Foundation distributed over 100 grants totalling \$610,686 to community organisations across Te Taihū, representing significant growth in our philanthropic reach.

Highlights of this year's distributions included major contributions from the GSG Wilson Fund (\$274,398), targeted environmental initiatives through the Marlborough and Nelson Tasman Environment Funds, funding in partnership with The Tindall Foundation, pass-through gifts, and dedicated educational scholarships.

Community Need and Looking Ahead

Throughout the year, the committee observed a marked increase in community need. For-purpose organisations and grassroots groups across Te Taihū are serving communities facing persistent cost-of-living pressures, whilst also balancing their own rising operational expenses and unprecedented demand for essential services.

In response, we remain committed to keeping our funding processes accessible and transparent, exploring multi-year and responsive funding opportunities, and working collaboratively within regional funder networks. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our donors, whose sustained generosity enables support for our community during these challenging times.

To ensure we support our donors to have the greatest possible impact we focus on these key areas:



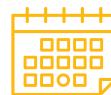
We participate in community meetings and workshops across the region to understand community need and aspiration.



We make our funding processes as easy and transparent as possible for our community and listen to their feedback.



We participate in funders forums and networks to ensure we understand the wider funding landscape and can draw on their expertise.



We are piloting multi-year funding to give organisations stability when delivering projects.



We ensure donors can share their community knowledge and in turn are well informed about the community to support their donation process.



We offer different types of funding to support a variety of kaupapa for example scholarships, grants, general and focused funds.



Our staff and Board have expertise to help our donors including in law, accounting, community work and administration to ensure the donor and community journey is a smooth one.



We promote our organisation in a variety of forums and locations to ensure all donors and organisations understand and have access to the opportunities we offer.

Our Strategic Foundations

To guide our next phase of growth, the Foundation has refreshed its strategy, defining who we are and setting a clear direction for our work and impact through to 2030.

PURPOSE - Why we're here

We make local generosity last forever, so Te Taihū can shape its own future.

VISION - The future we serve

Resilient and vibrant people, places and nature across Te Taihū – forever.

OUR ROLES - What we do



Build a local asset

We convey, connect and make sense of what Te Taihū needs.



Distribute for impact

We move funding and support to where it does the most good.



Community leadership

We attract generosity to Te Taihū and hold it permanently.

PRINCIPLES - What we hold ourselves to



Trustworthy

We are careful with what we are given, we respect and honour wishes, and we do what we say.



Locally rooted

Decisions about Te Taihū are made here, by people accountable to it.



Community-led

Te Taihū holds the knowledge it needs. We connect and strengthen rather than impose.



Easy to work with

We keep the burden we place on those we fund as light as we can.



Good ancestors

The fund is held for generations after ours. We weigh decisions by what they inherit.

TE TIRITI O WAITANGI - A standing commitment

Long-term wellbeing in Te Taihū requires Māori as genuine partners – not recipients of decisions made elsewhere.

Strategy to 2030

Our future view captures the future we are working towards: a place where generosity keeps giving, forever.

AMBITION - What we're building towards

\$30 MILLION
Under Management by 2030

So we can do more good together -
now and for generations to come.

WHY IT MATTERS

- ♥ More funding for our communities
- 🕒 A stronger more sustainable Foundation
- 🌱 More of our resources staying in Te Taihū
- 🎯 A region with greater ability to shape its own future

ENABLERS - What will get us there



Fund the Growth

We're young and building. Operating support, grows our capacity now, and every gain fuels the next — better work, greater reach, a faster-growing fund.



Build the Giving Pipeline

Growth comes from relationships — matching people's generosity to what they care about in Te Taihū. We're thoughtful about who we approach, and committed in the relationships that follow.



Stay Close to Te Taihū

We stay close to what we fund, so we understand the region and can show what our funding contributes to.

MOMENTUM - Each part feeds the others

Relationships and good work earn trust, trust brings giving, giving grows what we can do - and impact people can see draws more people in.

TAKE PART - Strengthening our region together



Give

A gift today, a named Fund, or a bequest — all of it held for Te Taihū, forever.



Partner

As a professional advisor, a community organisation, or alongside iwi and Māori.



Learn

What we learn from the region shapes the way we fund.

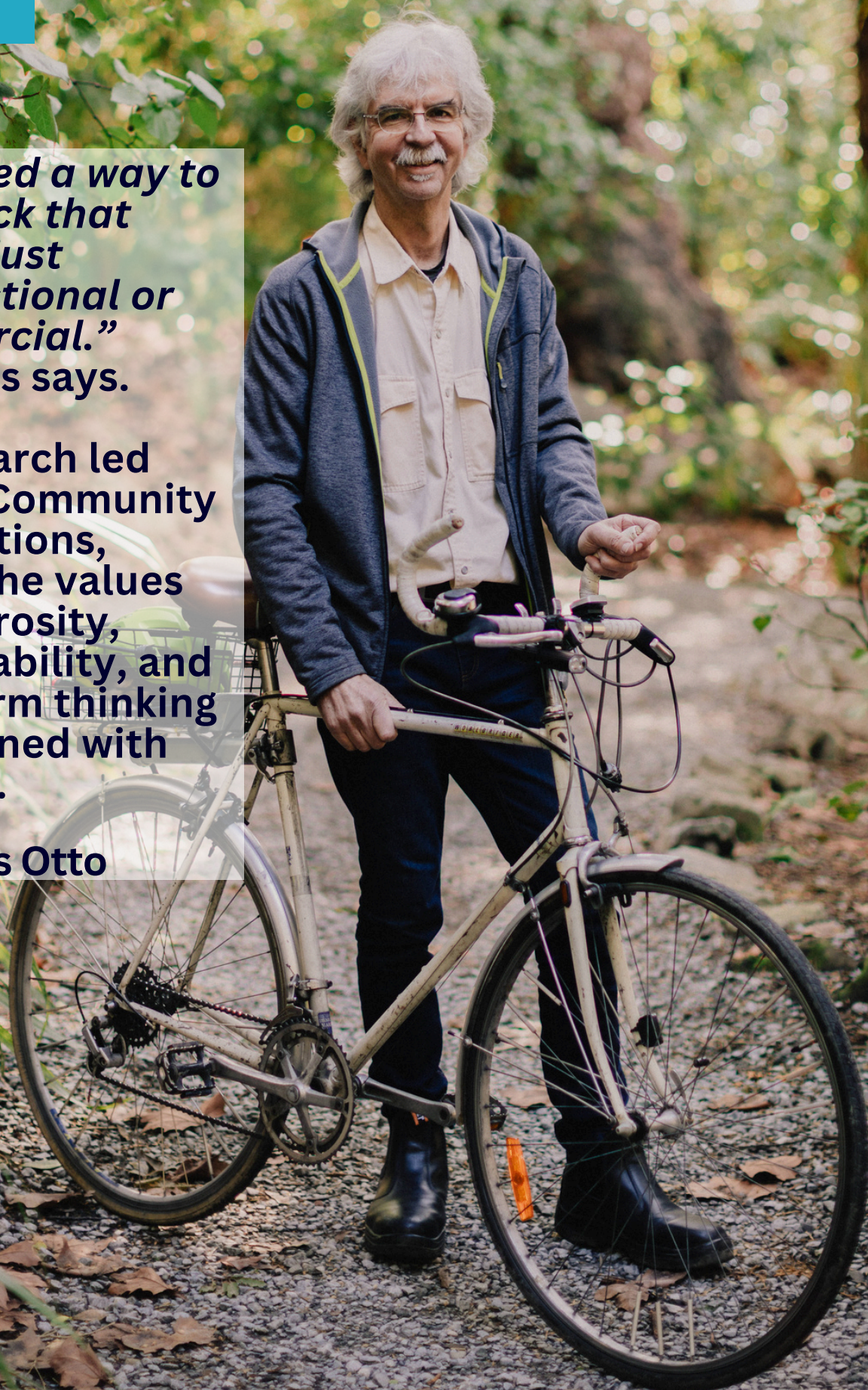
Te Taihū — the Top of the South: Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough.

Hero Donor Stories

“I wanted a way to give back that wasn’t just transactional or commercial.”
Matthias says.

That search led him to Community Foundations, where the values of generosity, sustainability, and long-term thinking felt aligned with his own.

Matthias Otto



Generous Donors, Thriving Communities

The heart of Top of the South Community Foundation

Our donors are the reason generosity keeps working for Te Taihū. Every gift, whatever its size or shape, helps us support the people, places and causes that make this region what it is.

Some donors set up a named fund. Others give in memory of someone they loved, or simply choose to support a cause close to their heart. However it begins, each gift reflects something personal, a value, an experience, a connection to this place.

Whatever moves you, whether it's whānau, a place, or an experience that shaped your life, there's a way to give that fits. We're here to help you find it.

To every donor, named and anonymous, thank you. Because of you, the causes you care about can keep thriving, today and for years to come.

Building funding that lasts, for Te Taihū, forever

Healthy, thriving communities need more than a one-off boost, they need funding that's still there next year, and the year after that.

That's why we invest every gift we receive, however big or small, so it can keep supporting Te Taihū long into the future.

Gay's Story

"People have given so much to me. I wouldn't have survived some of life's challenges without the kindness, generosity and belief of others. I hope my gift helps negate that sense of hopelessness and isolation that people feel." - Gay Sweeney

Gay Sweeney spent her working life finding her voice, first on the airwaves, then in public relations. After a serious brain injury, she rebuilt her life on the West Coast, where she saw firsthand how easily people living with brain injury can be left feeling forgotten and alone.

Now living back in Nelson, Gay has chosen to leave a gift in her Will to Top of the South Community Foundation, in support of Brain Injury Top of the South and West Coast, asking that it help fund an ongoing support role for people going through what she went through.

"I hope my gift helps negate that sense of hopelessness and isolation that people feel," she says.

Having put her gift in place, Gay says she feels at peace. "I feel at peace now that I've done it, and I know it's going to be used."

As she reflects on what giving means to her, Gay puts it simply: "It's not how you start off. It's all about how you finish."

Gay Sweeney



Tanya's Story

“Small, regular contributions can add up to a meaningful impact, and it’s encouraging to see members of our community choosing to give in thoughtful and consistent ways when they can.” - Tanya McMurtrie



Tanya McMurtrie and her Mentee, Lily

In a world that often mistakes busyness for generosity, Tanya McMurtrie has quietly, consistently, and wholeheartedly shown up for her community for more than two decades. Not for recognition. Not for reward. But because she genuinely believes that one person, the right person, at the right time, can change another person's life. She has seen it happen. Again and again.

A commitment that started 20 years ago

Tanya McMurtrie is an Investment Advisor at Craigs Investment Partners in Nelson. She is sharp, thoughtful, and deeply connected to Te Taihupū. And for 20 years, she has been a volunteer mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nelson-Tasman. Twenty years. That is not a fleeting act of kindness. That is a calling.

In that time, Tanya has walked alongside young people through some of the most formative years of their lives, offering steadiness, encouragement, and the kind of genuine human connection that no programme can manufacture.

“I want every child to have the chance to thrive,” she says. “My legacy gift and regular donating lets me support programmes that open doors for young people.”

Giving that comes back to her

What sets Tanya apart isn't just what she gives, it's that she gets to see where it goes.

Through her connection to the Top of the South Community Foundation and the community groups it supports, Tanya witnesses the real-world impact of her generosity.

She doesn't just give and wonder. She sees the organisations strengthened, the young people supported, the community she loves growing more resilient because of what people like her choose to do. That is what Living Giving looks like. Generosity that is alive, present, and deeply personal.

“I love the saying: one person cannot change a community, but you can change a community one person at a time,” she says. “Payroll Giving ties into this for me.”

Giving in three layers

Tanya's approach to generosity is considered and layered — much like her professional thinking. She doesn't give in one way. She gives in three.

Tanya donates regularly to the Top of the South Community Foundation directly from her pay through Payroll Giving. Through Craigs Workplace Giving programme, employee contributions are matched dollar for dollar by the company. And looking further into the future, Tanya has included a legacy donation in her Will, ensuring her commitment to the young people of Te Taihupū continues long after she is gone. Her generosity, quite literally, will outlast her.

“While I can't single-handedly solve every challenge we face as a society,” she says, “I can impact people's lives by making a small contribution myself. I can contribute monthly and donate to the charities I support on an annual basis, so my donation has more meaning to my chosen charity.”

From Grant to Impact

Grant Funding Stories

Behind every grant is a donor who chose to give, and a community that felt the difference. That's the simple truth at the heart of what the Foundation does across Te Taihū.

Grants don't need to be large to matter. For many local groups, funding from the Foundation covers something practical and immediate, a piece of equipment, a season of programming, or the breathing room to keep a service running when things are tight.

This past year, over 100 grants totalling \$610,686 went out to organisations doing exactly this kind of work throughout Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough. Since the Foundation began in 2010, that support has added up to more than \$1.4 million.

What follows are thirteen Grant Funding Stories, a selection drawn from across the region and across the charitable purposes we support, each one a small window into what that giving actually looks like on the ground.

WARES FAMILY FUND

23 Squadron Nelson Air Training Corps— Leadership and Fieldcraft Camp



Some of the biggest lessons in a cadet's year don't come from a classroom: they come from a weekend in the bush, leading a team, and figuring things out for yourself.

With support from the Wares Family Fund, administered by Top of the South Community Foundation, 23 Squadron Nelson Air Training Corps ran Exercise Fantail, its annual leadership and fieldcraft camp at Golden Downs. Cadets pitched their own tents, took turns leading their teams, and built practical skills in navigation, bushcraft, and camp cooking.

As Squadron Leader Michael Lissant-Clayton shared, "Exercise Fantail is an action-packed Leadership and Fieldcraft camp designed to challenge, inspire, and grow confident leaders."



Whenua Iti Outdoors - Wellbeing in Our Community

Great outdoor education programmes can change how young people see themselves, but keeping that momentum going once the programme ends is its own challenge. For tamariki at Victory School, Whenua Iti Outdoors found a way to make it last.

With support from Top of the South Community Foundation and generous donors, Whenua Iti Outdoors delivered seven follow-up programme days directly at Victory School, giving students further opportunities to practise communication, teamwork, empathy, and positive friendship skills in a familiar setting.

"Exciting activities, pitched at a great level, Te Reo Māori, me tikanga, fantastic instructors, great energy and pace of the day," said one Victory School teacher.

Thanks to our donors, the benefits of the original Whenua Iti experience are being sustained well beyond the initial programme.



Nelson Young Parents School - Onsite Social Worker Support

For young parents, staying in education while caring for a baby can feel like an impossible balancing act. At Nelson Young Parents School, an onsite social worker is helping make it possible.

Generous donors, through Top of the South Community Foundation, provided funding towards the role, which helped students and their whānau access healthcare, counselling, housing support, and parenting services, while providing advocacy and practical assistance during times of crisis. It has also freed up other resources, including a dedicated sleep room for exhausted students and their babies.

"Knowing there was someone at kura who could help me with appointments and everyday challenges made a huge difference," one student shared.



Cultural Conversations - Voices Served Series

Through Autumn and winter, Cultural Conversations brings together women from different ethnic backgrounds for warm, welcoming dinners where stories are shared and strength is found in community.

The Voices Served series responds to real challenges many women face, financial hardship, housing insecurity, health struggles, and social isolation. Each dinner includes gentle, open-ended questions, created by the director, designed to honour each woman's story and create space for listening and learning, with a peer-led approach so new women can step into leading when comfortable.

Our grant supported this kaupapa, helping more women across Te Taihuhu feel seen, heard, and nourished.

"I've always believed that you can get a group of strangers, and have them sit around a table. They will eat, and they leave as friends," said Kalpana, Voices Served dinner host.

Tasman



He Kai Kei Aku Ringa — Rangatahi Wānanga

For youth across the Top of the South, learning to gather, cook and share kai/food is about far more than a practical skill, it's a way of building confidence, resilience and belonging. He Kai Kei Aku Ringa is a not-for-profit offering programmes for children, teenagers and adults to learn hunting, diving, fishing, gathering and preparing food.

Thanks to generous donors, funding from Top of the South Community Foundation supported a six-week programme taking youth out onto land, river, sea. Alongside learning purākau/stories and hands on kai/food gathering skills, participants processed and cooked what they caught, then gave it back to the wider group.

Youth built strong relationships with each other and their facilitators along the way, developing independence and a real sense of responsibility, both to Te Taiao/the world around us and to their whānau/families and community.



Wilderness Canoe Trust - Kōhine Adventure Health Programme

For young women in Motueka navigating the harder parts of adolescence, Wilderness Canoe Trust found a different classroom, one built around canoeing, climbing, and campfires.

Across four school terms, the Kōhine Adventure Health Programme combines outdoor adventure with facilitated kōrero on identity, values, and belonging, woven through with Te Ao Māori. Participants built stronger self-belief, formed lasting friendships, and developed a deeper understanding of what it means to stay well. Thanks to generous donors, the programme reaches kōhine in Motueka who need it most.

As one participant shared: "I've learned that I can't control everything and that's ok, to just let go, and to stop assuming something will suck before I've even tried it."



Respiratory Support Nelson — Motueka Better Breathers Programme

For Motueka residents living with asthma, COPD, or bronchitis, Better Breathers classes offer more than exercises for stronger lungs, they offer connection.

Run weekly through the year by Respiratory Support Nelson, now celebrating 50 years of community support, the classes bring people together to share experiences, build confidence, and reduce the isolation that often comes with chronic illness.

Our grant helped cover trainer, venue, and equipment costs, keeping the programme accessible for a community where specialised respiratory care can be hard to reach.

Participant Tania Appelman describes the impact simply: "I love my life again and I am so thankful to everyone that I have met along the way."

Golden Bay



Project Jonah - Community Whale Rescue Programme

Golden Bay, known as Mohua, is one of the world's whale stranding hotspots, and now local residents are trained and ready to help when strandings occur.

With support from the Golden Bay Fund, Project Jonah delivered a Marine Mammal Medic course, combining classroom learning with hands-on practice. Participants gained the practical skills and confidence to assist stranded whales and dolphins, with trainers travelling from across the country to teach in this remote region.

The course builds local capacity and resilience, meaning Mohua communities can respond quickly when strandings happen, and grows a wider network of advocates for ocean health.



Big Brothers Big Sisters – Mohua Mentoring Coordinator

Having a Big Brother or Big Sister can mean trust, confidence, and a sense of safety that changes how rangatahi see themselves.

Thanks to generous donors, funding from Top of the South Community Foundation supports the Mohua Mentoring Coordinator, who matches rangatahi with volunteer mentors and ensures their safety through assessments, training, and close work with families and schools, across Community Based, School Based Adult, and School Based Teen Mentoring. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nelson-Tasman now connects over 149 young people across the region.

As one caregiver shared, "My child is much more content knowing they have a Big Brother in their life... they've built trust, confidence, a sense of self-worth and safe, secure attachment."



Mohua Penguin Trust – Penguin Detection Dog Survey

Little penguins once thrived around Golden Bay's coastline, and a small trust with a big goal is working to bring them back. The Mohua Penguin Trust was formed to preserve, protect and enhance the population of little penguins and their habitat across the region.

Funding supported the Trust to carry out a detailed survey of Ngāwhiti Island, working alongside DOC certified penguin detection dog Miro and handler Jo Sims. The project, which began three years ago, aims to establish a new, safe sanctuary for the species. Members of the community continue trapping on the island, working to keep it predator-free for the penguins moving in.

As the survey shows, the effort is gaining real traction, with penguins already moving into the nest boxes provided, a strong early sign that the sanctuary is taking hold.

Marlborough



Marlborough Chamber of Commerce - Future of Work Expo

For many young people trying to picture what comes after school, seeing career options up close makes all the difference.

The 2026 Future of Work Expo, delivered by Marlborough Chamber of Commerce with support from Top of the South Community Foundation, connected secondary students with more than 80 exhibitors representing local employers, tertiary providers, and training organisations. Around 2,000 people attended, exploring career pathways before an open session for whānau and the wider community.

As Kylie Cornelius, Executive Officer, shared, "Support from the Top of the South Community Foundation gave us the confidence and enhanced our capacity to deliver an event that connected more than 2,000 young people with local employers, educators and industry."



South Marlborough Landscape Restoration Trust - Lost Stream Wilding Pine Removal

Deep in the South Marlborough backcountry, past Greig's Hut and through native beech forest, lies Lost Stream, one of the region's last untouched wild places. In November 2025, fourteen volunteers spent three full days and two half days there, working to clear wilding pines before they take hold for good.

With a grant from the Top of the South Community Foundation's Marlborough Environment Fund, the team extended last year's work across Hidden Valley, building on a control programme already showing a 95 percent success rate.

"I am more confident than before about protecting the Lost Stream valley. The volunteer work over several years has made a huge difference," said Andy Buchanan, a volunteer on the trip.



Forest and Bird – Te Hoiere Bat Recovery Programme

Deep in the forests of Te Hoiere, Marlborough, the pekapeka-tou-roa, New Zealand's long-tailed bat, is fighting to survive. Nationally critical, with females raising just one pup a year, this species has no margin for error.

Thanks to generous donors, funding from Top of the South Community Foundation went towards four AT220 self-resetting predator traps, deployed around known maternity roosts. Unlike conventional traps, the AT220s reset automatically, maintaining continuous predator pressure day and night, even when volunteers can't be on site. Rat tracking indices have been maintained below 5%, a strong indicator of effective predator control.

As Forest and Bird Predator Control Officer Lucie Daniskova explains, without this technology it would be extremely difficult to achieve the same results.

Strengthening Our Network



Chelsea Routhan speaking at Craigs 'State of the Nation' event

Building a stronger culture of giving

It takes more than grants to build a culture of giving. This year, we ran initiatives connecting donors, advisors, organisations and partners, growing philanthropy and inspiring more people to give where they live. Together, these efforts are helping generosity become part of everyday life across Te Taihū.

Building Partnerships

Strong communities are built when people work together. Community organisations, businesses, local government, iwi, funders and sector leaders all play their part in creating a thriving region.

One of our key roles is bringing these groups together. Through collaboration, we help strengthen community connections, share knowledge across the sector and create more opportunities for people to give where they live.

We contributed to:

- Tasman Grant Funding Drop in Sessions (Tākaka, Motueka and Richmond)
- Philanthropic Prospectus Whakatū Nelson Steering Group
- Positive Ageing Expo Steering Group
- Kōtuitui, Strengthening the Sector
- Nelson Tasman Funders Network
- Marlborough Funders Network
- The Little Collective
- Te Kāpuhipuhi o Te Taihū

Together, these partnerships are helping connect communities across Te Taihū.

Connecting with our region

Growing generosity starts with connection. Throughout the year, we targeted speaking opportunities, community events and conferences, reaching donors, business leaders, investors, iwi, the public, service clubs, sector leaders, councils and mayors. Conversations covered grant funding, legacy giving and regional priorities.

New promotional resources, including brochures, flyers and a branded exhibition stand, helped us engage with more people across Te Taihū.

We've connected with our communities through:

- Craigs State of the Nation presentation
- The Long View, an evening of conversation with Rangitāne o Wairau and Craigs Investment Partners
- Positive Ageing Expo
- Rotary Group presentations
- Angel Investors Marlborough presentation
- Aspire 2026 Conference

Professional Advisors Network Launch

We launched our flagship Community Champion - Professional Advisors Network (PAN), establishing a network of trusted lawyers, accountants and financial advisors who are equipped to introduce charitable giving into conversations with their clients.

Supporting the launch was a dedicated PAN webpage, advisor brochures, and two successful launch events in Nelson and Blenheim.

Raising Our Profile

Digital Analysis | 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026

35,171

LinkedIn
Reach

98,696

Facebook
Reach

+95%

eNewsletter
subscriber
growth

135,000+

Audience
reach across
our digital
channels

Inspiring more people through stories

Stories have the power to inspire generosity. Throughout the year, we shared stories of donors, grant recipients and community organisations across our website, newsletters, social media and local media, helping more people understand the impact of local giving and the role the Foundation plays in our communities.

By sharing the people and stories behind local giving, we are helping make the Foundation's work more visible, relatable and relevant to people across Te Taihuhu.

In the Media

The Foundation has grown its profile through local media, sharing stories about community giving, local impact and the people and partnerships behind our work.



Nelson Weekly 9th Sept 2026

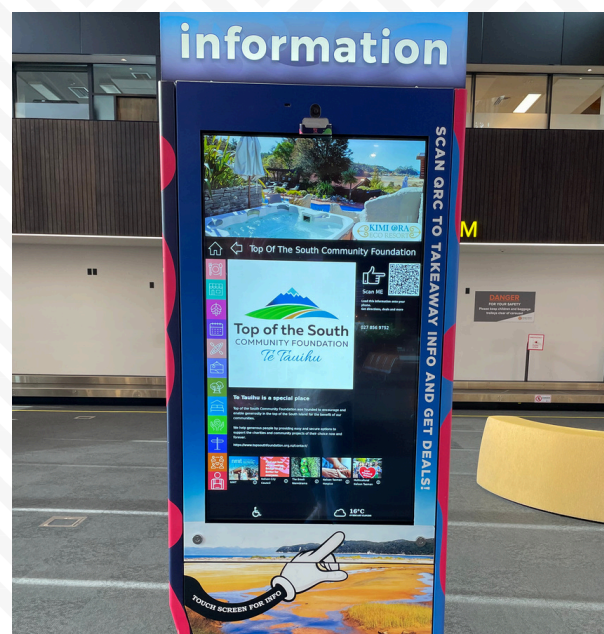
Reaching new audiences

From 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2026, our content reached audiences more than 135,000 times across our digital channels, connecting more people with stories of local generosity and impact.

We also introduced a Grant Recipient Communications Toolkit, making it easier for funded organisations to share their stories through their own channels and networks. This helped extend the Foundation's visibility beyond our own channels, reaching new audiences through organisations already connected with communities across Te Taihuhu.

Generous support from CUIK

We're grateful to CUIK for providing pro bono digital advertising across Nelson Airport, Kaiteriteri and Nelson CBD, giving the Foundation valuable additional visibility over the busy summer period.



Cuik Kiosk -Nelson Airport

15 Established Funds

Community Group Funds provide local organisations with a permanent source of income that supports their work for generations to come. Every donation made through Top of the South Community Foundation is professionally invested, creating an enduring source of funding that helps Community Group organisations continue making a difference across Te Taihū. Our current established funds are:

- Age Connect Fund
- Big Brothers Big Sisters Fund
- Brook Waimārama Sanctuary Trust Fund
- Chandrakirti Meditation Centre Fund
- Clifton Terrace School Legacy Fund
- Ernest Rutherford Retirement Village Special Needs Fund
- Lake Rotoiti Outdoor Education Trust Fund
- Life Linc Counselling Fund
- Nelson Surf Life Saving Fund
- Nelson Anaesthesia Education and Research Fund
- Nelson City Brass Band Fund
- Richmond Riding for the Disabled Fund
- Te Taihū Environment Trust Nature Legacy Fund
- Theatre Royal Nelson Community Group Fund
- Zest for Life Fund



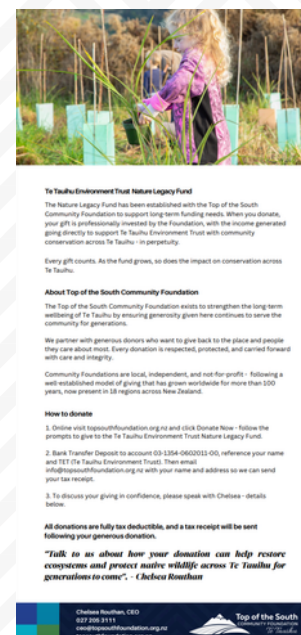
Local Giving. Lasting Impact

Supporting Community Group Funds

This year, TSCF established three new Community Group Funds and worked alongside existing fund holders to strengthen awareness and support their long term sustainability. Every Community Group Fund received a dedicated landing page, professionally designed flyer and communications toolkit, creating a consistent platform to share their stories, engage supporters and inspire local giving.

Local Giving. Lasting Impact Campaign

To further support our Community Group Funds, we launched Local Giving. Lasting Impact. In partnership with the Nelson Mail, this monthly series of advertorials is supported by TSCF social media and an eNewsletter snippet celebrating these organisations and the lasting difference they are making across Te Taihuhu.



DLE Flyer - doubled-sided

In partnership with **NelsonMail**

Local Giving. Lasting Impact.

Community groups making a lasting difference across the Top of the South

Fund supports vital conservation work

Advertisement

One million trees planted, 4339 pest traps set, 56,248 volunteer hours clocked up - and counting, thanks to the Te Taihuhu Environment Trust which has supported community-led conservation across the Top of the South for more than 25 years. The Trust works alongside local groups, landowners, iwi, and volunteers to restore ecosystems and protect native wildlife. And the Trust is committing to continue this work for generations to come, with the help of a Community Group Fund it has established with the Top of the South Community Foundation.

Te Taihuhu Environment Trust Nature Legacy Fund provides long-term support for grassroots environmental projects across the region, from large landscape restoration initiatives, to volunteer-led trapping, planting, and habitat protection.

Trust Chief Executive Sky Davies says by building a permanent endowment, the fund helps ensure communities have the resources they need to care for nature. "We are creating a long-term funding source that supports community-led conservation across Te Taihuhu, ensuring local groups can restore ecosystems and protect native wildlife for generations to come."

Sky says with its decades of experience and strong networks that span funders, government, and iwi, the Trust's vision is of a landscape rich with healthy, diverse ecosystems thriving from the mountains to the sea. "We offer support and access to specialist skills and resources. Whether connecting people to meaningful projects, or linking like-minded groups and organisations, we're here to help great ideas take root and grow."

Every contribution, big or small, helps create healthier ecosystems and stronger communities, and everyone is welcome to be part of the journey, Sky says. It's this vital conservation work that will benefit from the Trust's partnership with the Top of the South Community Foundation, says Foundation CEO Chelsea Routhan. "The Te Taihuhu Environment Trust Nature Legacy Fund has been established to support the Trust's long-term funding needs. When you donate, your gift is professionally invested by the Foundation, with the income generated going directly to support Te Taihuhu Environment Trust with community conservation across Te Taihuhu - in perpetuity."

"Every gift counts; as the fund grows, so does the impact on conservation across Te Taihuhu. Talk to us about how your donation can help restore ecosystems and protect native wildlife across Te Taihuhu."

The Top of the South Community Foundation exists to strengthen Te Taihuhu's long-term wellbeing by ensuring generosity given here continues to serve the community for generations, says Chelsea. The Foundation partners with generous donors who want to give back to the place and people they care about most. Every donation is respected, protected, and carried forward with care and integrity, says Chelsea. Community Foundations are local, independent, and not-for-profit, following a well-established model of giving that has grown worldwide for more than 100 years, and is now present in 18 regions across New Zealand. All donations are fully tax deductible, and a tax receipt will be sent following your generous donation. To support the vital work of Te Taihuhu Environment Trust, visit <https://www.topofthesouthfoundation.org.nz/funds/te-taihuu-environment-trust-community-group-fund/>



Te Taihuhu Environment Trust has supported community-led conservation across the Top of the South for more than 25 years, and your generous donation can help it continue this vital work.



**Te Taihuhu
Environment Trust**

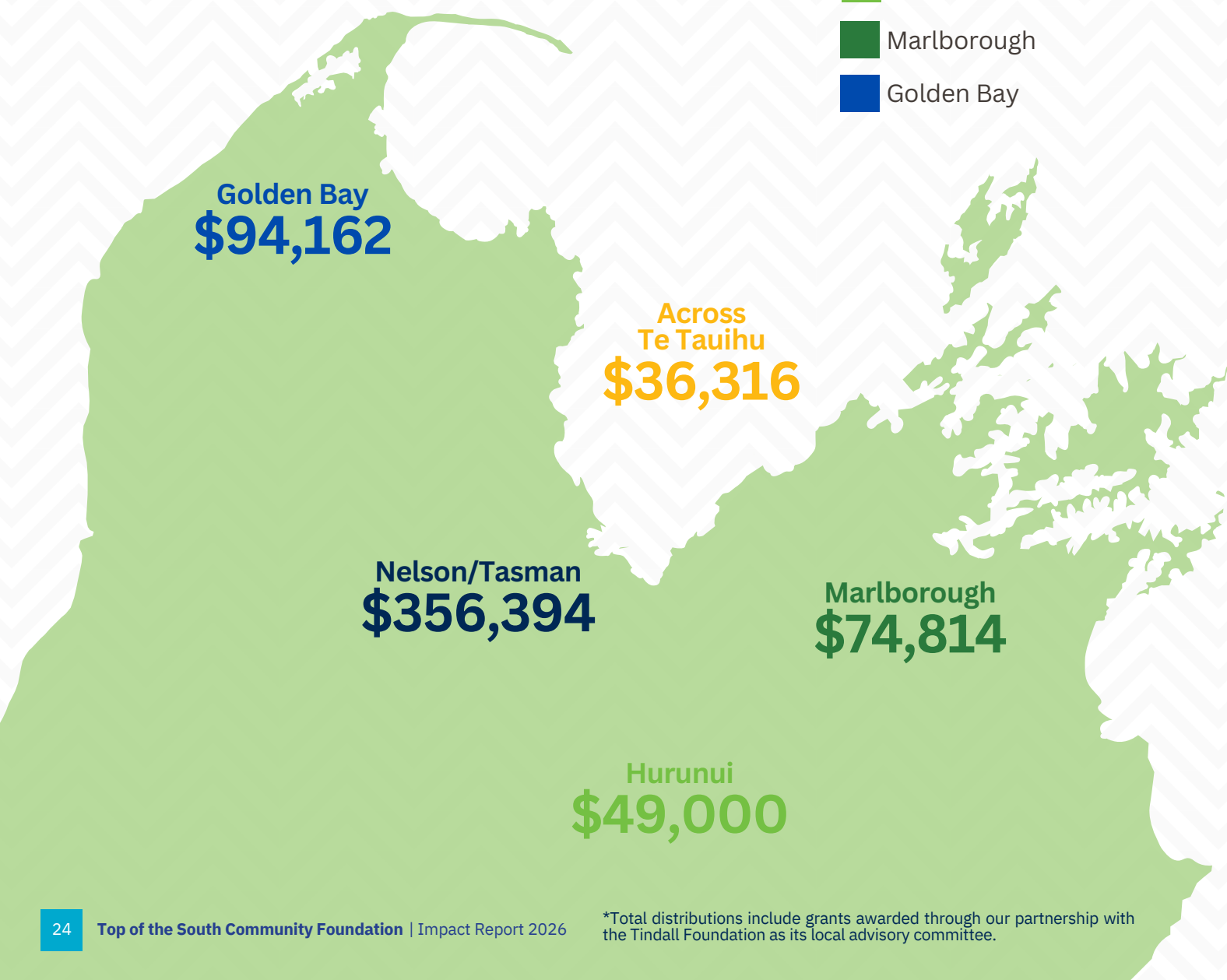
2025-2026 Grant Funding

The funding for these grants came from the returns on our investment portfolio and pass-through funding from donors. Sources of funding distributed for the year ended 31st March 2026 include:



**100+
GRANTS**

**TOTAL FUNDING
\$610,686***



2025-2026 Grant Distributions

Organisation Name	Project	\$
Annual Grant Round		
Annesbrook Community Trust	24-7 YouthWork & Shine Girl Programme	\$3,000.00
Beneficiaries and Unwaged Workers Trust	Benefit rights and advocacy	\$5,000.00
Big Brothers Big Sisters Nelson Tasman	Salary contribution - Mohua Mentoring Coordinator	\$10,000.00
Citizens Advice Bureau Nelson Tasman Inc	Support for every family unit	\$10,000.00
Complex Chronic Illness Support Incorporated	Operational Support for Tasman/Nelson	\$2,500.00
Cultural Conversations	Voice served - Conversation dinners	\$8,000.00
Fresh FM	Ethnic Communities On Air	\$5,000.00
Golden Bay Community Arts Council	Golden Bay Summer Arts Festival 2026	\$2,500.00
Golden Bay Workcentre Trust	Multi year grant 2nd instalment	\$10,000.00
Gymnastics Nelson Inc	Inclusive Gymnastics Programmes	\$6,800.00
He Kai Kei Aku Ringa	Rangatahi Wānanga	\$10,000.00
Life Linc Nelson Incorporated	Affordable counselling for our community	\$8,000.00
Magenta Creative Space Charitable Trust	Vulnerable Seniors and At-Risk Youth prog	\$10,000.00
Manu Ora	Manu Ora 'Tuakana-Teina'	\$5,000.00
Marlborough Boys' College	Driver licenses for all	\$3,000.00
Marlborough REAP Inc	Employability Skills for Rangatahi	\$5,000.00
Meat the Need	Meeting the Need in Nelson/Tasman	\$8,000.00
Mohua Penguin Trust	Penguin detection dog survey	\$3,000.00
Motueka Community Development Trust	The Spot Youth Development Centre	\$10,000.00
Motueka Group Riding for the Disabled Inc	KIA TŪ TĀNGATA (Stand tall together)	\$8,800.00
Motueka Women's Support Link	Multi year grant 2nd instalment	\$10,000.00
Multicultural Nelson Tasman Incorporated	Multi-year grant 2nd instalment	\$10,000.00
Nelson Community Food Bank Trust Inc	Provision of pre-cooked meals	\$3,000.00
Nelson Environment Centre Incorporated	Kai kākahu	\$3,000.00
Nelson Festivals Trust (Nelson Arts Festival)	Enabling 310 rangatahi to attend exclusive Artist led workshops and talks at Nelson Arts Festival 2025	\$1,500.00
Nelson Women's Centre Inc	Wāhine Connect – Support Services for Vulnerable Women & Families	\$10,000.00
Parent to Parent Nelson	Outreach Programme	\$8,000.00
Perinatal Support Nelson Incorporated	Supporting whānau affected by PND	\$6,000.00
Presbyterian Support Upper South Island	Transport costs for our Enliven service in the Nelson region	\$5,000.00
Pride Wairau Manatōpū	Pride Wairau Festival 2026	\$3,000.00
Project Jonah New Zealand	Community Whale Rescue Course	\$867.00
Respiratory Support Nelson (previously Nelson Asthma Society)	Motueka Better Breathers Program	\$3,858.00
South Marlborough Landscape Restoration Trust	Backcountry volunteers into Lost Valley	\$10,000.00
Tapawera Connect	Tapawera Youth Activities Programme 2026	\$5,000.00
Tasman Bay Guardians	Love Rimurimu education programme	\$5,000.00

2025-2026 Grant Distributions

Organisation Name	Project	\$
Annual Grant Round continued		
Tasman Environmental Trust	Snowden's Bush	\$2,277.00
Tasman Environmental Trust	Rare and Threatened Plants	\$2,100.00
Tasman Environmental Trust	Parapara Valley Environmental Group	\$2,195.00
Tasman Environmental Trust	Friends of East Mohua	\$3,000.00
Te Ātiawa Manawhenua Ki Te Tau Ihu Trust	Te Hoe Tū	\$10,000.00
Te Tai o Awatea	Te Kura Waka Taurua	\$9,600.00
The Marlborough Chamber of Commerce	Future of Work Expo	\$6,000.00
The Villiage Theatre Society Inc	Upgrade of operational laptops	\$2,500.00
The Young Nelson Trust (operating as Rangatahi o Whakatū / Youth Nelson)	Taha tinana – kai and hākinakina	\$10,000.00
Trees for Survival	Support the Environmental education & restoration programme	\$3,000.00
Untouched World Charitable Trust	Youth Leadership for Sustainability Programmes	\$5,000.00
Victory Community Centre Charitable Trust	Volunteering Programme	\$2,000.00
Victory Community Centre Charitable Trust	Māra Kai	\$10,000.00
Victory Community Centre Charitable Trust	The Community Navigation Collective	\$10,000.00
Victory Primary School	Victory Homework Academy (VHA)	\$10,000.00
Waimea Men's Shed	Trades Skills & Language Enhancement Program	\$10,000.00
Whakatū Te Korowai Manaakitanga Trust	Multi year grant 2nd instalment	\$10,000.00
Whenua Iti Outdoors Trust	Wellbeing in our community	\$10,000.00
Wild Waikawa	Mentorship to build conservation careers	\$5,000.00
Yellow Brick Road	Funding for support courses	\$5,000.00
Annual Grant Round Subtotal		\$345,497.00
Donor Directed Fund Grants		
Air Cadets (Air Training Corps Association of NZ)	Wares Cadets grant 2025	\$1,000.00
Hanmer School	Wares New playground grant 2025	\$34,000.00
Malaghan Institute of Medical Research	Roadley Fund Grant 2025	\$6,500.00
Nelson Cadet Unit	Wares Cadets grant 2025	\$1,000.00
Nelson Marlborough Rescue Helicopter	Roadley Fund Grant 2025	\$6,500.00
TS Talisman Sea Cadets	Wares Cadets grant 2025	\$1,000.00
Donor Directed Fund Grants Subtotal		\$50,000.00
Donor Directed pass through Grants		
Big Brothers Big Sisters Nelson Tasman	Donation to BBBS	\$2,520.00
HealthPost Nature Trust	Donation to HealthPost Nature Trust	\$47,500.00
Second Chance Nelson Tasman	Second Chance Dog Charity	\$1,000.00
Wairau Nature Network	Contribution for setup of the webpage	\$1,700.00
Donor Directed pass through Grants Subtotal		\$52,720.00

2025-2026 Grant Distributions

Organisation Name	Project	\$
Community Group Fund Grants		
ERRV Special Needs Foundation Inc	Smart grass flooring project	\$19,875.00
Pamela Millson	NZSA inpatient pain network meeting	\$429.00
Community Group Fund Grant Subtotal		\$20,304.00
Scholarships		
Amuri Area School scholarships	9 scholarships for University students	\$15,000.00
Beacon Scholarship	Part payment for 1 scholarship student	\$1,916.00
Scholarships Subtotal		\$16,916.00
Marlborough Environment Fund pass through Fund		
Blenheim Natural Learners Cooperative	Ohinemahuta Revegetations Project	\$4,606.00
Hinepango Wetland Restoration Group	Hinepango Wetland Restoration Project	\$4,990.00
Ngati Rārua	Trees for Marlborough	\$5,000.00
Selmes Charitable Garden Trust	Trees for Marlborough	\$10,000.00
Te Hoire Bat Recovery Project	Support for bat recovery project	\$2,485.00
Marlborough Environment Fund pass through Fund Subtotal		\$27,081.00
Discretionary Fund		
Nelson AI Sandbox Limited	ChatGPT-Plus License Programme for Not-for-Profits	\$9,840.00
Discretionary Fund Subtotal		\$9,840.00
The Tindall Foundation Distributions		
Distributions from The Tindall Foundation across Te Tau Ihu	Variety of projects focused on equity and supporting whānau to thrive	\$82,400.00
Tindall Subtotal		\$82,400.00
Craigs Christmas Giving		
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Motueka	General costs	\$1,000.00
Life Linc Nelson Incorporated	General costs	\$1,000.00
Marlborough Community Foodbank Inc.	General costs	\$750.00
Marlborough Four Paws	General costs	\$750.00
Marlborough Women's Refuge	General costs	\$1,000.00
Nelson Community Food Bank Trust Inc	General costs	\$1,000.00
Nelson Women's Centre Te Whare Āwhina Mō Ngā Wāhine Puawai Incorporated	General costs	\$428.00
Craigs Christmas Giving Subtotal		\$5,928.00
Total funding given to the community*		\$610,686.00

*Total distributions include grants awarded through our partnership with The Tindall Foundation as its local advisory committee.

Acknowledgements

The Top of the South Community Foundation is incredibly grateful for the dedication and generosity of our donors, volunteers and partners. Together, their time, skills and resources help make a positive and lasting difference in our community.

First and foremost, we thank our incredibly generous donors, whose generosity funds our community projects, helping us create lasting change across our region. We also wish to thank everyone who has generously donated to our funds directly or online throughout the year, as well as those donors who wish to remain anonymous. Your generosity, in whatever form it takes, plays a vital role in the work we do.

We are especially grateful to our Individual Partners, whose ongoing generosity and commitment help sustain our work across Te Taihū:

Jane and Richard Peterson
Andrea and Mark Skatrud
Peter and Dawn Rackley
Paul and Cathy Nicholson
Peter and Debra Cole

Our Board of Trustees freely give their time, expertise and guidance to ensure the Foundation operates effectively and in line with our mission. Other volunteers support our day to day operations, helping us deliver on our commitments to the community.

We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our local commercial partners, who generously provide sponsorship, pro bono expertise, and in kind support across every part of our work.

Our website is backed by ongoing webcare, hosting, and strategic advice that keeps everything running smoothly. Our systems are kept secure and stable through reliable IT, strong data protection and expert guidance that sets us up for the future. Our accounts are prepared pro bono each year, giving our small team confidence to meet all compliance and audit requirements. And our marketing and communications are managed with expertise. Together, this generosity keeps our operational costs low, our systems secure, and our story reaching further across Te Taihū.

We are also grateful for the ongoing support of our strategic partners, Community Foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand, The Tindall Foundation and Craigs Investment Partners, whose guidance, expertise and sector connections help strengthen our work and grow our impact across Top of the South. Thank you for being a vital part of our work, and for your continued generosity and commitment to Te Taihū.



info@topsouthfoundation.org.nz

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